

Cafodd yr ymateb hwn ei gyflwyno i'r ymgynghoriad ar y cyd a gynhelir gan y [Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol](#) a'r [Pwyllgor Cyfrifon Cyhoeddus a Gweinyddiaeth Gyhoeddus](#) fel sail i'w [gwaith craffu ar Iechyd a Gofal Digidol Cymru](#)

This response was submitted to the joint consultation held by the [Health and Social Care Committee](#) and the [Public Accounts and Public Administration Committees](#) to inform their [scrutiny of Digital Health and Care Wales](#)

SDHCW 13

Ymateb gan: | Response from: Centre for Digital Public Services

**CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO PAC SCRUTINY OF DHCW
FROM THE CENTRE FOR DIGITAL PUBLIC SERVICES**

CEOs HARRIET GREEN & MYRA HUNT

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Response areas:-

- The process of establishing DHCW and progress in the first year, progress achieved and outstanding challenges.

RESPONSE: DHCW has clearly signalled its intention to bring a new approach to delivering the goals of the organisation as it has moved on from its previous incarnation. There has been a sense of new energy and dynamism with the change and appointment of new leadership. The visibility of the new CEO and other senior leaders brings a face to the organisation, which contributes to a sense of seeking to open up and engage with the sector, whereas previously perhaps there had been a less accessible feel.

In another sense, the challenges faced by the organisation haven't significantly changed and some of these feel deep-seated and stubborn. As such, there is a legacy of potentially low expectations from some stakeholders which will be difficult to shift. Even more may need to be done to signal the level of desire to listen to concerns, invite stakeholders in to share issues, co-design solutions and work towards solutions openly. "Working in the open" is a new trend towards publicly sharing how organisations are addressing problems, being open about challenges, progress and achievements through external communications. These may be blogs, shared videos, use of webinars or video calls by project teams to "show and tell" about their work, or offer video "lunch and learn" sessions. These approaches can increase trust, building a picture of transparency and willingness to collaborate to solve shared problems. More of these approaches could be helpful to DHCW.

In the digital community, sharing problems and solutions is increasingly the norm and often supports value for money as teams can re-use solutions developed in other teams. In this vein, I would encourage DHCW to promote "communities of practice", where people with similar digital skills or challenges across the sector meet to share challenges and solutions. There are many existing communities of practice in the public sector in Wales and DHCW could also encourage establishing more.

- Progress on recommendations of Fifth Senedd Public Accounts Committee reports.
- Prioritisation and manageability of the work programme and change agenda, including workforce, skills issues, cybersecurity and any areas of particular pressure or concern.

RESPONSE: DHCW is the best-funded and arguably highest profile agency for digital change in the Welsh public sector. It therefore needs to be a role-model and pathfinder to better solutions across the sector. Wales has drawn up a powerful Digital Strategy <https://gov.wales/digital-strategy-wales.html>, and it would be of benefit to the wider task of implementing this strategy to see DHCW referring to the Strategy and highlighting how its work is contributing to implementation. I would highlight the commitment in the Strategy to put the user at the heart of designing for change. While appreciating this is harder to do than to say, the digital sector has developed now tried and tested methods to achieve this, which DHCW could have a strong focus around. The goal and impact of user-centred approaches to service design are essentially value for money-driven. User-centred design helps change programmes to get things right first time, and avoid scenarios whereby new systems or tools are created without sufficient knowledge of users' needs or behaviour – which is often the cause of users struggling to use new systems or finding them incompatible with their needs or processes.

Taking this wider, I would like to see DHCW show more explicitly how it is moving away from older-style “top down” mindsets in determining priorities. Often in the past, organisations relied on their own internal priorities and experience to determine development and programme priorities. The digital sector now tends to use more user-focused and collaborative, taking consultative approaches to choices around priorities and programmes of work. Again, this is with the intention of delivering value-for-money solutions that meet real needs and address users' priorities.

Experience in the digital industry shows that taking a ‘working with’ approach leads to more lasting change than approaches that feel like “we are doing this for you”- or even, “to you”. These approaches can lead to so-called ‘learned helplessness’ in organisations and a lack of ownership or agency in owning and delivering change. As a result, any change delivered can wither on the vine.

In pursuit of lasting change, DHCW could work more with a collaborative ‘we are doing this together’ approach, with a transparent goal that organisations it works with will develop their own digital capability and change agency/capability. This is all the more important as digital products and channels change and update frequently. Therefore it is critical to have sufficient and appropriate capability within organisations to respond to changes in technology and in users' expectations..

- Relationship with local health boards, NHS trusts, local authorities, social services providers, and other key stakeholders including patients and patient groups.
- Workforce and skills capacity within other health and care bodies; whether they have sufficient capacity to engage and potential impact on delivery of DHCW priorities.

RESPONSE: This is a key challenge for all organisations trying to deliver digital change across Wales. Most, if not all, public sector organisations do not run with spare capacity to engage with change programmes (usually the opposite, they are already stretched). Neither do change programmes generally succeed in winning business change funding in their budgets. This presents an often

critical blocker to successful digital change, as effective change can only be delivered with appropriate engagement with those who actually run the business processes.

This is a significant blocker to delivering the Digital Strategy for Wales, and a solution is necessary if Wales is not to fall further behind in harnessing the power of digital solutions.

- Assessing the impact of DHCW's work and whether it's achieving its objectives.
- Data transparency, accessibility, quality, and comparability with health and social care data and key performance indicators across the UK.